
REBECCA SPENCER
Registrar of Voters



ART TINOCO
Assistant Registrar of Voters

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC)
Meeting Minutes
January 30, 2017 | 10:00 a.m.

Committee Members:

Julie Caban, Chair
Larry Smith, Co-Chair
John Kopp, Committee Member
Mario Janesin, Committee Member
Gabe Taylor, Committee Member
Feliciano Godoy, Committee Member
Chuck Reutter, Committee Member
Diane Gamache, Committee Member
Pauline Gaeta, Committee Member

Guests:

Foster Tucker
Ronak Patel
Sharley Reutter
Everleane McNuh

Registrar of Voters Staff:

Rebecca Spencer, Registrar of Voters
Art Tinoco, Assistant Registrar of Voters
Chris Neubauer, Chief Deputy Registrar of EO & Polls Division

Meeting Commenced at 10:05 a.m.

I. Welcome/Introductions

Introductions were made of the following staff: Registrar of Voters Rebecca Spencer, Assistant Registrar of Voters Art Tinoco, Chief Deputy of the EO & Polls Division Chris Neubauer, Committee Chair Julie Caban and Committee Co-Chair Larry Smith. Following staff introductions, attendees of the meeting made introductions.

II. Democracy Live-Demonstration/Discussion

Democracy Live's accessible sample ballot was used for the first time in a public election during the November 2016 Election. Chris Neubauer reported that the site was a success

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for the Registrar's office during the November Election and it received over 1,500 unique hits. Mr. Neubauer demonstrated the standard view of the sample ballot on the Registrar of Voters website. Feliciano Godoy, from Blindness Support Services, gave a demonstration of the accessible sample ballot and candidate statement using JAWS Screen Reader. Democracy Live was also used to send out the UOCAVA ballot to the military and overseas voters. Mr. Neubauer stated that the Registrar's office is planning to renew the current contract with Democracy Live through 2017. For 2018 and moving forward, the County will go out to bid to see what other options there are for this technology. Chuck Reutter stated that he was very impressed with the online accessible sample ballot. Mr. Reutter also asked if California will be moving toward mail in ballots only. Mr. Neubauer stated that he will cover that in the New Laws section of the agenda. Mr. Neubauer thanked Mr. Godoy for his time and demonstration of the accessible sample ballot. Foster Tucker asked when the accessible sample ballot was up and running. Mr. Neubauer stated it was fully functional in October 2016; about two weeks prior to the November Election. Mr. Tucker asked if there was data showing how many hits the site received. Mr. Neubauer stated that the site received over 1,500 unique hits during the few weeks it was operational. Rebecca Spencer asked if Mr. Godoy received any feedback on the accessible sample ballot from the visually impaired community. Mr. Godoy stated that he forwarded the press release regarding the launch of the site to the clients from Blindness Support Services. He stated that everyone really liked that the ballot was accessible online and that the audio files were also very helpful. Mr. Neubauer stated that the Registrar's office also receives state level material on compact disc and cassette if anyone is interested in those files as well. Everleane McNuh asked if this technology will ever be available at the polls. Mr. Neubauer stated that there is a technological investment and network cost to have that technology available at the polls. It is not being considered at this time but it could be looked at in the future. Mario Janesin stated that along with receiving the sample ballot materials on cassette and compact disc, he was also able to download the information as an MP4 file. He was able to transfer the information on flash drives and that was very helpful.

III. *New Laws Affecting Riverside County*

Mr. Neubauer reviewed the new laws affecting Riverside County in the future. All of the new laws information is available in the New Laws Book that Larry Smith will send out to the VAAC members. **AB 1494** – The ballot “selfie” law allows voters to take a ballot selfie or disclose how they voted, as long as they are not participating in a vote buying scheme or other nefarious practices. **AB 1921** – The authorized agent law allows any voter to authorize the person of their choosing to return their Vote-by-Mail ballot, as long as that person is not being compensated to do so. The person dropping off the ballot will still have to print and sign their name and print their relationship to the voter. A person who engages in criminal acts related to the ballot, which includes willingly failing to deliver the ballot in a

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timely manner, is subject to punishment under the law. Mr. Tucker asked if there was a limit to the number of ballots a person can drop off under this law. Mr. Neubauer stated that there is no limit to the number of ballots that a person can drop off as long as the person is not being paid to do so. **AB 2010** – Electronic candidate statements allows candidates to pay a fee for their candidate statements to appear only on the ROV website and not the Sample Ballot and Information Pamphlet. The candidates can also chose to do both. This fee will be lower than the fee to appear in the printed pamphlet. **AB 2252** – Remote Accessible Vote by Mail systems allows “remote accessible vote by mail systems” that are used for the sole purpose of marking an electronic vote by mail ballot for a voter with disabilities or a military or overseas voters. Voters must print the paper cast vote record and submit that to the Registrar’s office. The Secretary of State will need to certify these systems for use in the State, and the bill does not stipulate when the paper cast vote record must be received by the Registrar of Voter’s office. Mr. Neubauer stated that there are currently 3 companies that have submitted paperwork to the Secretary of State’s office to become certified. This bill is an opt-in bill but in order to do SB 450 (Vote Centers) you would need to use the Remote Accessible Vote-by-Mail systems. There will be more information once the Secretary of State releases regulations for certification of the systems. **AB 2265** – What does a yes/no vote mean? Which allows the county counsel to provide the answers to the following two questions in the impartial analysis for a county ballot measure – “What does a yes vote mean?” and “What does a no vote mean?” Each answer must be 75 words or less. The language in the bill is “may” and not “shall”, meaning that counsel is not required to provide answers to these questions. **AB 2466** - Allows everyone over the age of 18 not imprisoned in a state or federal prison or on parole (being supervised by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation) to vote, and allows everyone who is 16 or 17 and not imprisoned in a state or federal prison or on parole (being supervised by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation) to preregister to vote. John Kopp asked if the Registrar’s office has liaison with the Sherriff’s Department and other police agencies. He also asked if they are aware of this new law and how cooperative are they being. Mr. Neubauer stated that they are aware of the new law but they haven’t had a lot of discussions with them at this point because it is still fairly new. The Registrar’s office will be working with the sheriff and police agencies to ensure this law is implemented correctly on a county level. **SB 450** – This is an opt-in bill which means it is not required; there are 13 test counties that could start this in 2018; Riverside County is not included in those. This bill converts all voters to Vote-by-Mail, counties must then establish Early Voting Centers that are open for 10 days prior to Election Day throughout the county to allow voters the opportunity to drop off their ballots, receive replacement ballots, or vote in person. At least 3 accessible voting devices must be provided at each Vote Center. For early voting there would be 1 vote center for every 50,000 registered voters. On Election Day and 3 days prior there would be 1 vote center for every 10,000 registered voters. Based on the current registration count of 1 million registered voters, Riverside County would have 100 vote centers on Election Day and 3 days prior. If this bill is adopted, there is a lot of work going

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into a draft plan of implementation that would need to go to the public and then to the Secretary of State's office for approval. Mr. Kopp asked if the Board of Supervisors had a rough estimate of how much the implementation would be for this bill. He also asked if this bill calls for free postage on Vote-by-Mail ballots. Mr. Neubauer stated that this bill does not call for free postage, however, there is a separate bill in legislation in favor of paid postage on ballots. The Board of Supervisors does not have an idea of what implementation will cost the county at this time. The Secretary of State's office still needs to finalize regulations for what poll books and ballot on demand will look like under this model. Mr. Kopp asked if it is a state mandated bill, would the State be responsible for covering the cost for the county to implement this model. Mr. Neubauer stated that because this is an opt-in bill, the County would be responsible for the cost of implementation. Ms. Spencer clarified that Mr. Kopp was referring to the postage paid bill, not SB 450. Mr. Neubauer stated that he has not read the postage paid bill yet so he is unable to comment. Gabe Taylor asked when Riverside County would have a better idea if they will be opting into SB 450. Mr. Neubauer stated that he hopes the county would have a better idea by 2018 when the Secretary of State's regulations are finalized. This bill requires the support of the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Spencer stated that the Registrar's office will have a better idea in 2019 due to the change in 3 board members in 2018. Two out of the three board members are retiring and 1 has passed away so it is hard to judge what the current board members will want versus the board members that are in office during implementation. She stated that the county will come up with an analysis for the cost as they are right now for SB 450 versus polling places and present it to the Board to see how they want to move forward. This will involve the community in a lot of public hearings before a decision is made. Mr. Kopp asked if the Secretary of State's office mandated that the implementation results from the 13 test counties of SB 450 will be publicized. Mr. Neubauer stated that it is not mandated for the test counties to release results from their implementation. Each test county will submit a plan to the Secretary of State's office for approval and will have public hearings which are all public records. There will be a lot of data available in the coming years to see what worked for the test counties and what didn't. The earliest Riverside County could transition would be 2020 but the Board of Supervisor could chose to go with a later transition date of 2022 or so on.

IV. Review of November 2016 Election

Mr. Neubauer gave a brief overview of the accessibility statistics from the November 2016 Election that were emailed to the VAAC members. There was 258 assisted voters which included 70 curbside voters and 14 audio voters. There was 8,369 ballots cast on accessible voting units (AVUs). Approximately 750,000 ballots were cast in this election which is a 75% turnout. 2/3 of those voters were Vote-by-Mail voters and 1/3 of those voters voted at their polling place. There were a total of 71,116 provisional ballots cast; of those 43,949 were accepted as is, 14,843 were modified to fit their precincts and 12,324

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were rejected due to not being properly registered in Riverside County. Mr. Reutter stated that he worked at a polling place for this election and he will not work again because the hours are very long. He stated if those hours could be split up there would be more volunteers, in his opinion. Mr. Reutter asked how the Registrar's office deals with the provisional ballots that are cast by people who are not registered in Riverside County. Mr. Neubauer stated that the 12,324 provisional voters that were not registered had their ballots rejected. There is an extensive research process for verifying that rejected ballots are truly rejected for proper reasons. After the election, those provisional voters are sent a registration card in hopes of getting them registered properly so their ballots do not get rejected in the future. Mr. Taylor asked how the voter is notified that their ballot was not accepted. Mr. Neubauer stated that the Registrar's office does send a letter letting them know that they are not registered to vote and they need to register to vote in order to cast a ballot. Mr. Smith stated that 9,950 of those letters have been sent out; the remaining 2,374 provisional voters provided an incorrect address so they cannot be located. Mr. Tucker asked if there was any evidence of voter fraud in the November 2016 Election. Ms. Spencer stated to her knowledge there was no voter fraud found. Ms. McNuh asked if there was a record high of provisional ballots for the November Election. Mr. Neubauer stated that numerically it was a record high but percentage wise it was not. Ms. McNuh stated that there were voters coming from Los Angeles to vote and she informed them that their provisional ballot would not be counted. Mr. Neubauer stated that poll workers should not advise voters whether or not a provisional ballot will count because it is up to the Registrar's office to determine the eligibility of a voter. There are also changes coming with conditional voter registration where people will be able to come to the Registrar's office on Election Day and register to vote and cast a ballot. Mr. Reutter stated that many of the people that received provisional ballots were very angry. Mr. Neubauer stated that he understands the frustration, however if a person's name is not listed at the polls, the provisional ballot is what gives them the opportunity to vote until the Registrar's office can determine eligibility following the election. If the County adopts SB 450, a voter will be able to go to any vote center to cast their ballot so the number of provisional ballots will decrease. However, until that time provisional ballots will be given to voters that cannot be located on a polling place roster.

V. Upcoming Elections in 2017

Julie Caban discussed the upcoming elections in 2017. The City of Riverside will have an election on June 6th for Wards 2, 4 and 6. At this time there aren't any measures on the ballot. The Registrar's office will be meeting with the City Clerk to discuss the specifics for that election on February 1st. There is a possibility that Moreno Valley will also be having an election for District 4 City Council Member. The City of Moreno Valley would have polling places for their election and the City of Riverside would be an all-mail ballot with postage paid by the city. The City of Lake Elsinore may also have an election but it has not been

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confirmed yet. There will be an all-mail ballot election on August 29th for the Uniform District Election that has to do with the water districts for the land owners and residents. The November 7th election includes school districts in Banning and Perris, city council members for Blythe, Norco and Palm Springs as well as special districts and water districts. In the city of Riverside if a candidate does not receive 50 +1 vote, they would go to a run off in the November Election. This will be a polling place election with an estimated 60 locations and 180 poll workers. Mr. Kopp asked if Norco would be switching from odd year to even year elections. Mr. Neubauer stated that in 2015 a law passed that requires smaller municipalities to align their elections into even number years unless they can show a certain percentage in turnout rates. Most small districts are unable to meet that percentage requirement so there will be more switching to even numbered years beginning in 2018. Ms. Spencer stated that the Registrar's office has not received any official paperwork from the City of Norco. Mr. Taylor asked if an AVU would be available at the City Clerk's offices for the all-mail ballot elections. Ms. Spencer stated that AVUs will only be available on Election Day at the Registrar of Voters office. Mr. Foster asked if the accessible sample ballot would be available online for all of the elections. Mr. Neubauer stated that Democracy Live would be utilized for the elections through 2017. In 2018 the County will go to bid on the technology.

VI. Status Report on the State VAAC

Mr. Smith reported that the State VAAC has not met since the September 2016 meeting. Once new information becomes available about the next State VAAC meeting, Mr. Smith will forward it to the VAAC members. Mr. Tucker asked if the minutes from the September 2016 State VAAC meeting were on the Registrar of Voters website. Mr. Smith stated that the State VAAC minutes were available on their website but he would email them to Mr. Tucker.

VII. Subcommittee/Committee Guidelines

By-laws Sub-Committee – The Registrar of Voters office sent a revised version of the committee guidelines to the subcommittee for their review. Mr. Taylor reported that the subcommittee would like to schedule a meeting with the Registrar's office to review the changes. Ms. Spencer asked Mr. Taylor to work with her assistant to schedule the meeting.

Mobility Sub-Committee – No report given at this meeting.

Visually Impaired Sub-Committee – No report given at this meeting.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing Sub-Committee – No report given at this meeting.

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VIII. Questions/Comments

Mr. Taylor asked if the Registrar's office would consider doing an updated PSA to include information on SB 450 and how it will affect voters with disabilities. He stated that this is a big change in the voting process and the current PSA does not include any information on that change. Mr. Neubauer stated that it is still early to change any information because it is at least 3 years away and there will be many elections taking place before it is implemented. Voter outreach is included as part of SB 450 to ensure that voters are aware of the change and understand the new process before it is implemented. Mr. Taylor suggested doing a more general PSA including a 4 year plan for VAAC. Ms. Spencer reported that \$50,000 from the County budget will be dedicated to the VAAC in 2017. If any other grants become available the Registrar's office will apply for those as well. VAAC members will help determine how the \$50,000 is spent. Mr. Neubauer would like to know what items are priority to the VAAC members to work on for the next few years. Mr. Kopp asked if the VAAC minutes could be made available earlier. Mr. Neubauer stated that the Registrar's office does get the minutes out to the VAAC as quickly as possible and will continue to do so. Mr. Janesin stated that he was a precinct inspector for the November 2016 Election and the inspector training was great. He suggested updating the Through Our Eyes video because it is outdated and too long. However, he felt the video did help with disability sensitivity. Mr. Janesin also suggested having more hands on training with the AVUs during the training class with a short test ballot. Mr. Neubauer stated that they expanded the training to include hands on and the test ballot should have been from the April 2016 Election which only had one item on the ballot. Mr. Janesin suggested re-tooling the disability training to make it more useful and splitting the day between two people so the day isn't as long. Mr. Neubauer reported that there were 3,400 poll workers and recruiting that number of people is a challenge. The Registrar's office has developed a survey to get feedback from the election officers. He thanked Mr. Janesin for his time at the polls and for helping to develop the survey. Mr. Janesin also reported that his precinct had fantastic student poll workers and the Registrar's office should do a push to the high schools and colleges to recruit more student poll workers. Mr. Tucker reported that he conducted an International Delegation Study Tour with Los Angeles County and Riverside County Registrars of Voters and University of California Riverside. The group had lunch at the Riverside County Registrar of Voters office and had a presentation on the VAAC. Mr. Tucker thanked the Registrar's office for their time and support and he presented the office with a certificate of appreciation. He stated that it was very well received and appreciated. Ms. Spencer stated that the Registrar's office has received a couple of VAAC applications and she asked the sub-committee how they would like the applications to be processed. Mr. Taylor stated because the guidelines are still being finalized it is ok for the Registrar's office to process the applications they received instead of holding onto them. Ms. Spencer

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asked if there was any comments or feedback on the survey before it is sent out. Mr. Janesin stated that he liked the survey and he was ok with it being sent out. Ms. Spencer stated that the survey will be sent out to the inspectors to get their feedback on the November 2016 Election.

Meeting adjourned at 11:43 a.m.